both in favour of and against the decision for the transfer of mining lease for Bailadila Iron Ore Deposit 11-B to a joint venture company.

The major apprehension expressed in the representations of the Unions against the said transfer of the mining lease was that establishment of a new joint venture company with a private sector partner would deprive local people, especially tribals of employment opportunities. The other major issues raised in the representations were that the private party may not take up development of the local are; it would deprive N.M.D.C. of the benefit of expansion; the consideration proposed to be charged was inadequate and that there may be clash of interest between the joint venture partners over the use of existing infrastructure facilities.

Concerns expressed by different trade unions/ organisations were considered by the Ministry of Steel. Keeping these in view certain safeguards were provided and included in the note for the Cabinet prepared by the Ministry, and later approved by the Cabinet, envisaging that :

(i) NMDC may charge as consideration for transfer of the mining lease an amount that would enable it to recover the actual expenditure incurred by it on deposit 11-B including the cost of exploration of the deposit and preparation of DPR (updated to current costs through an appropriate method to be determined by NMDC in consultation with a professional organisation like ICWAI), observing all the requirements for transfer of lease prescribed under the Mineral Concession Rules, 1960;

(ii) The joint venture company will recruit all skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers for the Bailadila deposit 11-B project through the local employment exchange, except to the extent that such workers are not available with the local employemnt exchange and a certificate to that effect is provided by the exchange; and

(iii) In case any infrastructural and other facilities already created by NMDC are required to be used by the joint venture company, NMDC will be free to levy user charges in respect of such facilities on commercial basis.

These conditions have been incorporated in the joint venture agreement signed between NMDC and the joint venture partner.

The representations in favour of the transfer of the Bailadila 11-B mining lease expressed the view that it would open avenues for greater employment opportunities for the local people and ensure speedier development of the area.

The representations were replied to appropriately by the Ministry of Steel.

Fishing Harbours

*17. SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the details of work completed on the construction of the Fishing Harbours at the Mapila Bay in Kerala;

(b) the allocation so far made for the two projects respectively;

(c) whether the work is progressing as per schedule; and

(d) the stipulated time for completion of the project and reasons for delay, if any?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) There is only one Fishery Harbour sanctioned and under construction at Mopla Bay. For the development of the harbour at Mopla Bay, the works of procurement of tools, Plants, machinery and construction of weigh-bridge are completed. Construction of breakwater and extension of groyne are also nearing completion.

(b) The expenditure incurred for the project by April 1996 is Rs. 281.21 lakhs. Government of India have released Rs. 240.00 lakhs against 50% share of sanctioned cost of Rs. 564.00 lakhs. Government of India have made a tentative allocation of Rs 450.00 lakhs for the current year 1996-97 for construction of Fishery Harbour Projects in Kerala, including Mopla Bay.

(c) and (d). The Fishery Harbour Project at Mopla Bay was accorded administrative approval in January, 1992 with stipulated time for completion of project of four years from the date of sanction. The project implementation is delayed as the construction could not be started till December, 1993 due to litigation in the High Court.

[Translation]

Production of Wheat

*18. PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA
SHRI GUMAN MAL LODHA :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware about the news regarding decline in wheat output which appeared in the Observer, dated May, 21, 1996;

(b) if so, the facts therein;

(c) whether Punjab, Haryana and Western Uttar Pradesh are sharing maximum contribution to the Central Foodgrain stock for the last several years;

(d) if so, whether the production of wheat in those States has declined during the current year as against the last year;

(e) if so, the extent to which it has declined alongwith the reasons therefor;

(f) whether the production of wheat in general is likely to decline during the current year in other parts of the country;

(g) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(h) the steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. The production of wheat in Punjab during 1995-96 is reported to be somewhat lower being 127.24 lakh tonnes as against last year's production of 135.42 lakh tonnes.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e). The production of wheat during 1995-96 has declined in Punjab and Uttar Pradesh but there is no decline in Haryana. The extent of decline in production during 1995-96 over 1994-95 il likely to be about 8.2 lakh tonnes and 3.6 lakh tonnes in Punjab and Uttar Pradesh respectively. The main reasons for fall in production of wheat during 1995-96 are reported to be decrease in consumption of DAP and other phosphatic fertilizers, unfavourable weather conditions particularly in February and March, which led to shrivelling of grains and attack of yellow rust.

(f) and (g). The production of wheat in general has declined during 1995-96 in most of the wheat growing States for the similar reasons as reported for Punjab and Uttar Pradesh.

(h) In order to increase the production of wheat in the country, an Integrated Cereal Development Programme in Wheat based cropping system approach is being implemented in the major wheat growing States. The Government has also raised concessions for domestic DAP from Rs. 1000 to Rs. 3000 per tonne. It has also extended concessions on imported DAP at the level of Rs. 1500 per tonne. The concession on Muriate of Pottash has also been raised from Rs.1000 to Rs. 1500 per tonne. These concessions on phosphatic and pottasic fertilisers are expected to result in a more balanced use of fertilisers and thus help in improving the productivity.

[English]

LPG Connections

*19. SHRI RATILAL VARMA :
SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the number of LPG connections provided during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(b) the number of LPG applicants on waiting list as on May, 31, 1996; and

(c) the time by which the remaining applicants are likely to be provided LPG connections?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU) : (a) A *Statement* is enclosed.

(b) The number of applicants on LPG waiting lists registered with the LPG distributors of the PSU Oil Companies in the country as on 1.4.1996 was around 132.82 lakhs.

(c) New LPG connections are released to waitlisted applicants according to serial order of registration, depending on new customer enrolment allotted to a distributor, based on slack available with each distributer, waiting list and total enrolment plan based on product availability in the country. Efforts are constantly on to release LPG connections to as many applicants and as early as possible For this purpose, higher LPG availability is being planned by increasing the capacity of existing production sources and commissioning of new LPG import facilities. LPG import facilities at Kandla and Mangalore are expected to be commissioned during 1996-97 and more such facilities are being planned. It is expected that by the year 2001, outstanding waitlists will be cleared and there will be only current waiting lists.

STATEMENT

Release of LPG Connections

(Figures in Thousands)

States	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
1	2	3	4
Andhra Pradesh	100.8	176.1	131 3
Arunachal Pradesh	5.4	7.1	5 2
Assam	27.2	45.3	32.2
Bihar	48.5	105.0	46 1
Goa	6.7	8 4	8 0
Gujarat	57 7	109 8	77 1
Haryana	44.4	65.1	47 2
Himachal Pradesh	52.2	48.2	116 3